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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 DAR ES SALAAM 000532

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/E AND INR/AA

E.O. 12958: 2/14/15

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [CASC](#) [TZ](#)

SUBJECT: CUF, CCM Partisans Clash in Stonetown
Environs

Classified by Pol-Econ Chief Judy Buelow for reason
1.4(b)

REF: A) Dar es Salaam 342, B) Dar es Salaam 317 and
previous

¶11. (U) Summary: CUF and CCM party activists clashed after the two opposing parties held separate rallies in the environs of Zanzibar Stonetown March 6. Various accounts by the press and political party leaders report that 14-26 people were injured in the melee, one critically. In addition, mobs torched several houses and vehicles, and looted shops. The Embassy Consular section has issued a Warden Notice describing the March 6 confrontation and reiterating cautions contained in the Consular Information Sheet that political demonstrations on Zanzibar can turn violent with little warning. Emboffs are urging leaders of both parties to publicly instruct their followers to refrain from violence. End Summary

¶12. (U) On the afternoon of March 6, the ruling CCM party and the opposition CUF held rallies at separate locations in the eastern environs of Zanzibar Stonetown. The Embassy FSN employee who is stationed on Zanzibar attended the CUF rally, where CUF Secretary General Seif Sharrif Hamad shared the platform with other CUF leaders. While the FSN could not attend the simultaneous CCM rally held two kilometers away, the FSN had attended other recent CCM events featuring the CCM Urban District Chair Borafia as speaker, the same leader who addressed the CCM March 6 rally. The FSN noted that, while neither party speakers had advocated violence, or incited party activists to attack their rivals, the language used at recent political rallies has been more confrontational than conciliatory. Speakers at the CUF rally denounced alleged incidents of CCM party malfeasance during the ongoing voter registration exercise, and urged their followers to be prepared to defend themselves against CCM malfeasance. The tone of the nearby CCM rally was likely very similar n past rallies, CCM leader Borafia has attacked CUF party rivals by name.

¶13. (C) The violence occurred after the rallies ended and groups of excited, slogan-chanting activists from both parties began to go their separate ways. In separate meetings on March 7 and 8, the CCM Organizing Secretary Kidawa Saleh and CUF Secretary General Hamad gave symmetrical but contradictory accounts of what happened next. According to the CCM version of events, the CUF rally ended first, and CUF militants, acting on direct instructions from their leaders, went to the site of the CCM rally and ambushed CCM activists who where heading for home. CUF Hamad said that the CCM rally ended first and that CCM militants, who had received special training in attack methods from Zanzibar CCM government, fought with the activists who were departing the CUF rally. Hamad said the CCM militants then torched homes of several CUF leaders and burned two vehicles parked by the home of one of Hamad neighbors, apparently because UF Guards deterred them from attacking Hamad residence directly. According to various accounts by the press, party leaders, and Embassy FSN, the toll from the clashes were: 14-26 people injured, one of them critically, some shops looted, two to three vehicles burned, and several homes partially burned.

¶14. (U) We are attempting to sort through the contradictory accounts to determine what actually did happen on March 6. Embassy FSN had followed a group of CUF activists as they departed the CUF rally that afternoon. He reported that they were very agitated, and that they were singing CUF slogans and insulting the Chairman of the Zanzibar Electoral Commission. Eventually, however, the group of CUF activists turned to the right, and

Embassy FSN very prudently turned left, so he did not view the subsequent violent clashes first hand. A few days later, Embassy FSN viewed the burned houses and confirmed that all had had some damage, some of it substantial, but that no structure had been burned to the ground. In a March 7 meeting, the CCM Kidawa said that 14 people had been hospitalized, all of them CCM supporters. At a meeting held on March 9, several donor-country diplomats said that CUF leaders had told them that CUF activists often avoid the public hospitals if they have been hurt in a clash with the CCM, and typically seek treatment privately.

15. (U) The violence occurred in the Stonetown environs, away from the major tourist sites, and there is no indication that foreigners were targeted in any way. As a precaution, CONS issued a warden notice, informing American visitors to Zanzibar of the March 6 violence and reiterating the caution, already contained in the Consular Information Sheet, that political demonstrations on Zanzibar have sometimes turned violent with very little advance warning.

16. (C) By happenstance, AF/E Deskoff Susie Pratt was visiting Tanzania March 4-9. Poloff accompanied her to previously-scheduled meetings with leaders of both the CCM and the CUF in the days immediately following the March 6 clashes. On March 9, poloff also attended a previously scheduled meeting of diplomats from missions that are contributing to Zanzibar ongoing project to establish a Permanent Voters Register. Poloff and deskoff urged leaders of both the CUF and the CCM to instruct their followers, unambiguously and often, to refrain from violence during the electoral campaign. Deskoff asked leaders of both parties to consider making a joint statement against violence. (The Secretaries General of the CCM and CUF have met periodically, although not recently, and their joint statements were a calming influence during the 2003 Pemba by-elections.) Poloff also exchanged information on the March 6 clashes with the diplomatic group, and asked that the diplomatic community continue to urge all sides to refrain from violence.

17. (C) Comment: We believe that the violent incidents of March 6 were spontaneous, and not planned by any party leadership. The violence may have resulted simply from the unfortunate decision to grant the rival parties permission to hold simultaneous rallies at sites separated by a mere two kilometers. It is likely there were many separate clashes, beginning soon after the two rallies ended and continuing into the night, which involved relatively small groups of party activists who sought out targets of opportunity, such as Hamad house, or each other. In her discussions with the diplomatic group, Poloff noted that we could waste many unproductive hours attempting to determine which party activists attacked first, and who was most to blame for the violence of March 16. Clearly, each party would like the diplomatic missions to make a statement condemning the other. Given the ambiguity of the situation, the diplomatic community would do best to avoid taking sides, and to continue to urge both the CCM and the CUF to condemn violence unequivocally. End comment.

Owen